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25 October 1957

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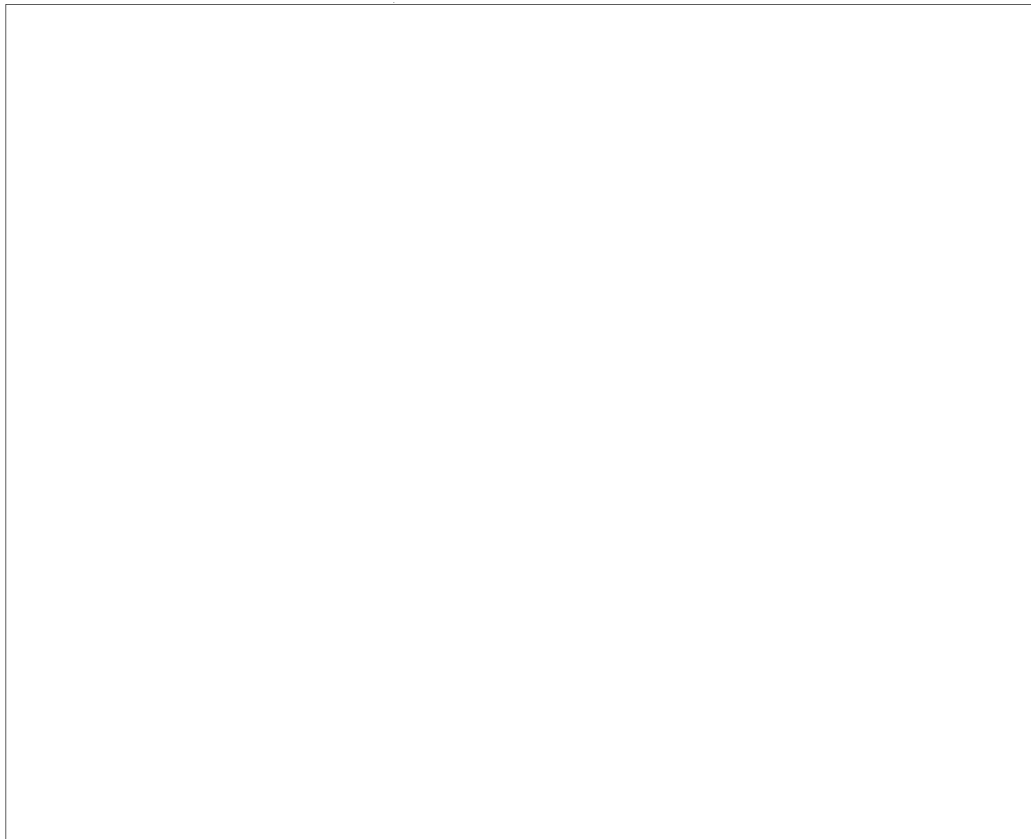
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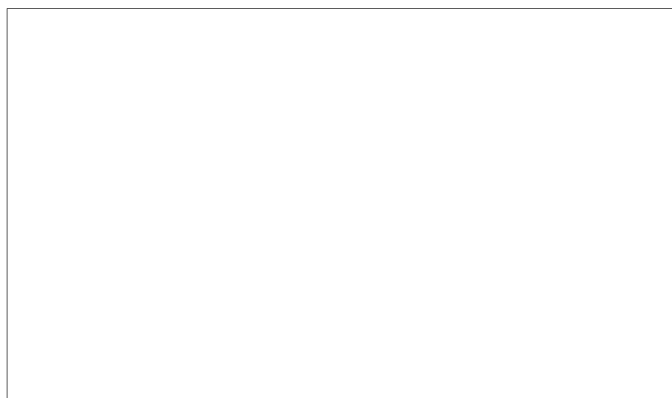
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1. SOVIET EXPLOITATION OF TURKISH-SYRIAN SITUATION

The USSR's moves in the Middle East over the past two months apparently have been based on the Soviet leaders' belief that American and Turkish responses to the extremist take-over in Syria last August can be exploited to advance major Soviet policy objectives. In addition to the immediate aim of forestalling military intervention and stiffening the Damascus regime against outside pressure or internal action designed to bring about its overthrow, these Soviet moves have been intended to:

- (1) enhance the USSR's self-appointed position as champion of Arab nationalism and the independence of small states, and their right to pursue neutralist policies;
- (2) expand Soviet influence and prestige through the Asian-African world and thereby strengthen Soviet efforts to counter the increased activity of American diplomacy in the Middle East since last January;
- (3) advance the basic Soviet objective of weakening Western alliance systems by generating suspicion of US intentions and mistrust of its leadership;
- (4) manufacture "proof" of an aggressive policy of the United States which could be used to facilitate the Soviet leaders' task of reimposing unity and discipline in the Communist world and defending the USSR's "leading role."

In pursuit of these aims, Moscow is exploiting the urgency of the Turkish-Syrian situation by claiming to have "verified data" on American and Turkish plans for an attack "immediately after the Turkish elections on 27 October." It has warned that hostilities will inevitably engulf other countries, particularly America's NATO allies.

Moscow is also maneuvering to place itself in a position to claim credit for any relaxation of Middle East tension and to throw the United States and Turkey on the

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defensive. It has offered to join the United States and any other country "to curb the aggressor" and has challenged the US and Turkey to state before the United Nations that they are against war and to withdraw Turkish troops from the Syrian border.

Although some of Moscow's warnings have contained deliberately ambiguous hints intended to imply that the USSR might intervene with its own forces in the event of a Turkish attack on Syria, available evidence indicates that the USSR has not yet made military preparations on a scale which would be anticipated for dealing with the broader contingencies which might follow such intervention. The Soviet Union does not appear to be explicitly committed to come to the military assistance of Syria in the event of an attack. The Soviet leaders appear to believe there is a greater likelihood of an internal coup than of foreign military intervention to overthrow the Damascus regime.

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2. USSR SUGGESTS THAT HAMMARSKJOLD ENTER SYRIAN SITUATION

Comment on:

UN Under Secretary General Dobrynin, a Soviet national, suggested to Secretary General Hammarskjold on 23 October that as secretary general he might take a hand in the Syrian situation.

Hammarskjold has concluded that his involvement would not be unpalatable to the Russians, but he told Dobrynin that to become involved too early would be unfortunate. Al-Hawrani, speaker of the Syrian Assembly, had said the day before that a visit by Hammarskjold to Syria would be welcome on the condition that he visit Turkey and Israel as well.

The USSR's primary purpose in the current session of the United Nations appears to be to inhibit any Turkish or Western action against the pro-Soviet Syrian regime. Presentation of the Syrian complaint to the General Assembly on 16 October resulted from Soviet prodding at the UN and in Damascus. Gromyko on the same day backed the Syrian complaint with a letter to UN General Assembly President Munro urging the UN to assist Syria immediately with armed forces in the event Turkey breaks the peace. His statement to Munro that the USSR "is prepared to take part with its forces in suppressing aggression and punishing the violators of peace" is the only public commitment the USSR has made in the Syrian crisis.

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3. TURKS REGARD DANGER IN SYRIAN CRISIS GREATER THAN EVER



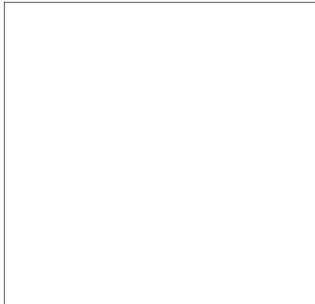
Turkish leaders assured Ambassador Warren on 22 October that Turkey will make no move "without closest consultation with Washington." The Turks are looking to the US in particular for leadership in handling Syrian and Soviet charges in the UN. Ankara considers the danger in Syria greater than ever and continues to maintain a state of military readiness in the vicinity of the Syrian border.

Prime Minister Menderes is aware of the dilemma which the situation poses for the other Arab states and has indicated a willingness to visit King Saud after the 27 October Turkish elections if he is invited.

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4. TURKISH-SAUDI DISCUSSIONS

Comment on:



King Saud told Turkish Minister of State Zorlu on 23 October that aggression against Turkey "would be bad," but that aggression against Syria would find the Saudi government beside its brother Arabs. Turkish and Saudi delegations are discussing the Syrian crisis in Dhahran.

According to Saud, Zorlu indicated that Turkey will move troops away from the Syrian border. It is unlikely, however, that the Turks, in view of the tension in the area, would withdraw more than a token force at this time.

Turkey, which has been trying to make contact with Saud for some time, was quick to accept Saud's invitation to talk. Turkish officials believe that Syria's refusal now can be exploited to advantage in the UN by Turkey's friends. 

5. **TURKISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN ENDS ON AIR
OF UNCERTAINTY**

Comment on:

[REDACTED] Top officials of the Turkish National Police believe, on the basis of reports from the provinces as well as from Ankara, that the opposition Republican

Peoples party will win the 27 October election. This is the strongest suggestion thus far that the ruling Democratic party might be upset. Various politicians and journalists have recently labeled certain crucial provinces as "completely uncertain."

Top Democratic politicians, including Prime Minister Menderes and President Bayar, have been campaigning vigorously, but have indicated no concern to American officials over the ultimate outcome of Sunday's balloting. Menderes is a capable and tough politician, and has no apparent intention of relinquishing his position of political power. He would probably employ highhanded methods to maintain himself if he thought the elections were going against him. [REDACTED]

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6. FRENCH POLITICAL CRISIS

Comment on:



Premier-designate Guy Mollet's chances of winning French National Assembly approval early next week appear to depend largely on his ability to neutralize the opposition of the Independent and Peasant party's rank and file who might reject Pinay's agreement with Mollet to accept Robert Schuman's financial and economic report as the basis for future government action. The Popular Republicans, whose support is essential, have already decided to participate in a government headed by Mollet.

If labor's response to the strikes scheduled for 25 October is widespread and effective, it may induce most conservative deputies to support Mollet in order to achieve at least a temporary solution, although some of them may become even more reluctant to accept a Socialist government. Mollet's reported reiteration of willingness to negotiate a cease-fire with the Algerian rebels may revive conservative fears of losing Algeria. The assembly is also likely to be cool to Mollet's proposed constitutional reforms which would limit its control over the government.

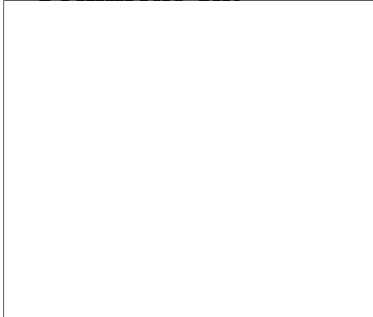
Mollet's Algerian policy could provide an opening for the Communists to offer their support as they did at the start of his previous government, in hopes of furthering their Popular Front campaign. Mollet is unlikely to accept an investiture in which Communist votes would be the decisive factor.

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7. MILITARY JUNTA TAKES CONTROL IN GUATEMALA

Comment on:



Guatemala is likely to be ruled by military government for some time, following the coup of early 24 October when a three-man military junta took power. The coup, which followed two days of rioting in the capital and in several provincial towns over the disputed 20 October presidential election, re-

moves from power the followers of the late president Castillo Armas and has probably moved the country toward a rightist dictatorship. The congress is likely to be dissolved, and new elections, though promised, are probably distant.

The junta is composed of colonels who have not been prominent in army or political affairs for several years. Their selection is probably a compromise by cliques of the faction-ridden army. The head of the junta is the conservative-minded 40-year-old Colonel Oscar Mendoza, former army chief of staff who lost the trust of Castillo Armas and was demoted to under secretary of defense in early 1955. Mendoza received military training in the United States and is considered capable and pro-American. Other junta members are Colonel Roberto Lorenzana, commander of an outlying military district, and Colonel Gonzalo Yurrita Nova of the air force.

Colonel Juan F. Oliva, former army strong man and defense minister, apparently lost out by resisting what seems to have been virtually solid army desire for a military junta. With Oliva's moderate and unifying influence in the army considerably weakened if not destroyed, the army will be even more vulnerable to internal factionalism. It is strongly anti-Communist, however, and will probably be able to suppress any further agitation by leftists and Communists, who joined in the violent demonstrations of 21 and 22 October.

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8. SOVIET UNION REPORTEDLY RELUCTANT TO RESUME DISARMAMENT SUBCOMMITTEE TALKS

Comment on:



A member of the Soviet UN delegation recently told a Western delegate that the USSR is reluctant to resume disarmament negotiations until "at least a few months" after the current General Assembly session is over. He reportedly also implied that, if the disarmament debates in the United Nations ended in a deadlock, the Soviet government might favor "intervention" by UN Secretary General Hammarskjold.

During the closing stages of the five-power Disarmament Subcommittee talks in London last summer, the Soviet representative appeared eager to transfer the discussions to the General Assembly. Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's opening speech before the General Assembly on 20 September also indicated a preference for an "atmosphere of wide publicity" for further disarmament discussions, as opposed to the "secluded character" of the subcommittee.

Moscow obviously would like to keep the disarmament question in open discussion before either the General Assembly or the Disarmament Commission, particularly if the latter were expanded according to the Indian resolution, for which the USSR has indicated support. It is unlikely, however, that the Soviet Union would refuse to resume negotiations if the General Assembly again referred the problem to the Disarmament Subcommittee.

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9. INDIAN CONGRESS PARTY AGAIN SUFFERS SERIOUS DEFEATS IN LOCAL ELECTIONS

Comment on:



The provincial organizations of Nehru's Congress party, on whose rejuvenation the future political complexion of India depends, apparently have as yet made no progress in overcoming serious weaknesses uncovered in the national elections seven months ago. In statewide municipal elections on 16 and 18 October in Uttar Pradesh State in North India, the Congress party's most important stronghold, preliminary returns show the Congress suffered crushing defeats exceeding the 25-percent losses it experienced in the national elections last March. Socialists and independents, many of them former Congress party members, made the greatest gains. The Communists maintained their former strength. Factionalism, lack of discipline, and loss of morale, evident in the Congress party throughout India, apparently were largely responsible for its losses.

The Congress party high command is deeply worried over its loss of popular support and has drawn up detailed plans for regaining contact with the people. Provincial party leaders, however, seem still unaware that they may eventually be ousted from office. Opposition groups, on the other hand, are becoming increasingly conscious that the once-monolithic Congress party is now susceptible to defeat.

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~~SECRET~~**10. UNREST IN SPAIN**

Comment on:



Popular dissatisfaction in Spain is widespread as the result of a cost-of-living increase amounting to about 20 percent since last November. Strikes and student disturbances are possible this fall.

Industrialists in Barcelona now are disposed to collaborate with anti-Franco elements who plan to organize student disturbances at Barcelona University about 1 November. Barcelona textile manufacturers are apparently disillusioned with the government's failure to check inflation, and to make good its February promise to grant them a measure of regional autonomy in economic matters. Their financial support could provide the means for opposition elements to develop some organized effort toward an effective policy.

Conservative groups are apprehensive over the failure of Franco, now 64, to provide for a successor. Franco may decide to reshuffle the cabinet again to keep his supporters unsure of their positions. The government can at present suppress any challenge to its authority.

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CORRECTION

**Current Intelligence Bulletin, 24 October 1957, Item 3, p. 5.
POLITICAL UNREST IN JORDAN**

The last paragraph should read: "To divert public attention from these difficulties, the Jordanians are again complaining to the UN about Israeli activities in the contested Jerusalem area.

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ANNEX

Watch Report 376, 24 October 1957
of the
Intelligence Advisory Committee

Conclusions on Indications of Hostilities

On the basis of findings by its Watch Committee, the Intelligence Advisory Committee concludes that:

- A. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against the continental US or its possessions in the immediate future.
- B. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against US forces abroad, US allies or areas peripheral to the orbit in the immediate future. Although Soviet statements have strongly implied that the USSR might intervene with its own forces in the event of a Turkish attack on Syria, available evidence indicates that the USSR had not yet made military preparations on the scale which would be anticipated for dealing with the broader contingencies resulting therefrom.*
- C. Unstable conditions and tensions stemming from developments concerning Syria continue to create possibilities

for conflict in the Middle East. The continued deployment of major Turkish forces on the Syrian frontier, the presence of Egyptian forces in Syria, and Soviet pressure moves combine to make this situation particularly tense. Although Turkish forces are in position to attack Syria, we have no evidence that Turkey has reached a decision to launch such an attack.

